

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Applicant notes with appreciation the allowability of claims 4, 5, and 13. Claim 19 has been added to include the limitations found in previously examined claims 1 and 4 and other minor changes to maintain the structure of the claims; claim 20 has been added to include the limitations found in previously examined claims 11 and 13 and other minor changes to maintain the structure of the claims. The Applicant submits that no further searching is required.

Reconsideration of this application in light of the above amendments and the following remarks is requested.

**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

**Claims 1-5:**

Claim 1 recites:

A method of crediting a balance of a pre-paid subscriber account in a telecommunications network, comprising:

receiving a voucher transaction by a node of the network, the voucher transaction including a voucher balance and a voucher discount value;

obtaining an account balance and an account discount value of an account associated with the voucher transaction; and

calculating a composite balance and a weighted discount, the weighted discount a function of the voucher balance, the voucher discount value, the account balance, and the account discount value.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application No. US2003/0008635A1 to Ung et al. ("Ung").

The PTO provides in MPEP § 2131 that

*"[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim...."*

However, contrary to the examiner's position that all of the limitations in claim 1 are disclosed in Ung, Ung does not disclose, for example, "calculating a composite balance and a weighted discount, the weighted discount a function of the voucher balance, the voucher discount value, the account balance, and the account discount value." The examiner cites Ung at page 3, paragraphs 0041-0047, as providing the teaching of this limitation. However in the cited paragraphs, Ung discloses equations, for calculating an "Adjusted\$Balance" that is based on the "rate of the first

replenishment card used, ... [b]alance of the first replenishment card used, ... rate of the second replenishment card used, and ... [b]alance of the second replenishment card used..." (page 3, paragraph 0042). Therefore, the rejection is not supported by the Ung reference and should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-5 depend from and further limit independent claim 1 and are allowable as well.

Claims 6-10:

Claim 6 recites:

A telecommunication network operable to provide pre-paid telecommunication services, comprising:

a node operable to perform switching services between at least two telecommunication devices;

a first database including a subscriber record having an account balance field and an account discount field; and

a second database including a voucher record having a voucher balance field and a voucher discount field, the network operable to receive a voucher transaction including a voucher identifier and a subscriber identifier, the node operable to interrogate the second database with the voucher identifier and obtain a voucher balance and a voucher discount value, the network operable to interrogate the first database and obtain an account balance and an account discount value from the subscriber record, the node operable to *calculate a composite balance and a weighted discount, the weighted discount calculated as a function of the voucher balance, the voucher discount value, the account balance, and the account discount value.*

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ung.

As noted above, the MPEP requires that a reference must teach every element of a claim in order to anticipate the claim. However, contrary to the examiner's position that all of the limitations in claim 6 are disclosed in Ung, Ung does not disclose, for example, a "node operable to calculate a composite balance and a weighted discount, the weighted discount calculated as a function of the voucher balance, the voucher discount value, the account balance, and the account discount value." The examiner cites Ung at page 3, paragraphs 0041-0047, as providing the teaching of this limitation. However in the cited paragraphs, Ung discloses equations, for calculating an "Adjusted\$Balance" that is based on the "rate of the first replenishment card used, ... [b]alance of the first replenishment card used, ... rate of the second replenishment card used, and ... [b]alance of

the second replenishment card used...” (page 3, paragraph 0042). Therefore, the rejection is not supported by the Ung reference and should be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 7-10 depend from and further limit independent claim 6 and are allowable as well.

Claims 11-15:

Claim 11 recites:

A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a set of instructions to be executed, the set of instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform a computer method of:

reading a voucher identifier;

reading a subscriber identifier;

interrogating a first database with the voucher identifier;

retrieving a voucher balance and a voucher discount value from the first database;

interrogating a second database with the subscriber identifier;

retrieving an account balance and an account discount value from the second database; and

*calculating a composite balance and a weighted discount that is a function of the account balance, the account discount value, the voucher balance, and the voucher discount value.*

Claims 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ung.

As noted above, the MPEP requires that a reference must teach every element of a claim in order to anticipate the claim. Therefore, with respect to claim 11, in order to sustain this rejection the Ung patent must contain all of the above limitations of the claim. However, Ung does not disclose “calculating a composite balance and a weighted discount that is a function of the account balance, the account discount value, the voucher balance, and the voucher discount value.” The examiner cites Ung at page 3, paragraphs 0041-0047, as providing the teaching of this limitation. However in the cited paragraphs, Ung discloses equations, for calculating an “Adjusted\$Balance” that is based on the “rate of the first replenishment card used, ... [b]alance of the first replenishment card used, ... rate of the second replenishment card used, and ... [b]alance of the second replenishment card used...” (page 3, paragraph 0042). Therefore, the rejection is not supported by the Ung reference and should be withdrawn.

Claims 12-15 depend from and further limit independent claim 11 and are allowable as well.

Claims 16-18:

Claim 16 recites:

A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a set of instruction to be executed, the set of instruction, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform a computer method of:

reading a subscriber identifier;

retrieving an account balance and *an account discount value* of an account record associated with the subscriber identifier;

initiating a timer upon a call setup attributed to a subscriber having the account assigned thereto; and

deducting units from the account balance, the units deducted based upon a timed call duration accumulated by the timer, *an airtime rate, and the account discount value.*

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,188,752 to Ulf Lesley (“Lesley”).

As noted above, the MPEP requires that a reference must teach every element of a claim in order to anticipate the claim. However, Lesley does not disclose, for example, “...retrieving an account balance and an account discount value of an account record associated with the subscriber identifier; initiating a timer upon a call setup attributed to a subscriber having the account assigned thereto; and deducting units from the account balance, the units deducted based upon a timed call duration accumulated by the timer, an airtime rate, and the account discount value.”

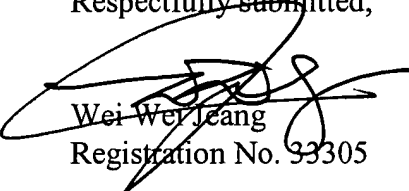
The examiner cites Lesley at column 8, lines 31-54, in support of his rejection of claim 16. However in the cited lines, Lesley discloses monitoring “...parameters...such as start time, elapsed time, origination location, destination location, rate information...” to “...warn the caller of nearing expiration of value/service...” and allow a “...billing record... to be generated and forwarded to the billing computer and correlated in the billing system subscriber database for use in generating the subscriber’s monthly bill. Therefore, the rejection is not supported by Lesley and should be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 17 and 18 depend from and further limit independent claim 16 and are allowable as well.

**Conclusion**

It is clear from all of the foregoing that independent claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 19 and 20 are in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 2-5, 7-10, 12-15, and 17-18 depend from and further limit independent claims 1, 6, 11, 16, 19 and 20 and therefore are allowable as well.

Respectfully submitted,

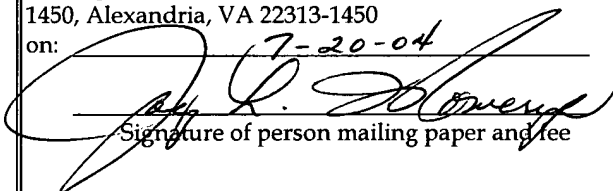
  
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